

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. - 15. (cancelled)

16. (previously presented): A literary work distribution network system, comprising:

one or more customer terminal apparatuses;

a management terminal apparatus for

enciphering and selling a right of use of a literary work to a customer through a communication circuit,

enciphering and transmitting use right frequency information for limitation of at least one of the number of times of use, the hour of use and the amount of use of the literary work to one of said customer terminal apparatuses, and

imposing a royalty for the literary work through the communication circuit in accordance with the number of times indicated by the use right frequency information; and

a literary work provider terminal apparatus for enciphering and distributing the literary work to a customer through the communication circuit;

wherein each of said one or more customer terminal apparatuses comprise:

a storage section for storing enciphered literary work data distributed thereto from said literary work provider terminal apparatus,

deciphering means for deciphering the enciphered literary work data and right of use of the literary work data stored in said storage section, and
a playback circuit for playing back the deciphered literary work data;
wherein said deciphering means comprises a use right frequency information storage memory provided therein for storing the use right frequency information deciphered by said deciphering means in such a manner that the deciphered use right frequency information cannot be referred to from the outside; and
wherein said deciphering means refers to the use right frequency information stored in said use right frequency information storage memory to read out the enciphered literary work data from said storage section and signals the read out literary work data to said playback circuit.

17. (previously presented): A literary work distribution network system as claimed in claim 16, wherein said deciphering means updates the use right frequency information stored in said use right frequency information storage memory in response to the number of times of playback by said playback circuit.

18. (previously presented): A literary work distribution network system as claimed in claim 17, wherein each of said one or more customer terminal apparatuses operates in response to the use right frequency stored in said use right frequency information storage memory such that, when the use right frequency is higher than "0", the enciphered literary work data stored in said storage section can be read out and deciphered by means of said deciphering means and then

the deciphered literary work data can be signaled to and played back by said playback circuit, but when the use right frequency is "0", the decipherment by said deciphering means is not performed and the enciphered literary work data cannot be played back.

19. (previously presented): A literary work distribution network system as claimed in claim 16, wherein the literary work is music data.

20. (previously presented): A recording medium on which a control program for causing a computer to implement the functions of the literary work distribution network system as claimed in claim 16 is recorded.

21. (new): A literary work distribution network system, comprising:
at least one literary work provider terminal apparatus, comprising control means enciphering and transmitting the literary works information;
at least one management terminal apparatus, operated independently from the at least one literary work provider, comprising control means for selling use right frequency to a user and for enciphering and transmitting the use right frequency information;
at least one customer terminal apparatus; comprising:
interface means for receiving literary works information from the at least one literary work provider terminal apparatus and use right frequency information from the at least one management terminal apparatus, via a communication circuit;

storage means for

an encipherment-decipherment section, comprising:

storage means for storing use right frequency information received from the at least one management terminal apparatus and the literary works information received from the at least one literary work provider terminal apparatus,

deciphering means for deciphering the use right frequency information and the literary works information in the storage means, and presentation means for presenting the deciphered literary works information to a user;

wherein the use right frequency information includes a use right frequency number, associated with the literary works information, indicating at least one of a permitted number of times of use, a permitted time of use, and a permitted amount of use;

wherein the deciphering means can not decipher the literary works information if the use right frequency number is “0”; and

wherein the deciphering means decreases the use right frequency number based on the presentation of the deciphered literary works.